

IN THE CLAIMS

1-32. (cancelled)

33. (currently amended) A method to offset stack pages of successive print or copy jobs that are supplied to a page output unit as a page stream, comprising the steps of:

providing a page acceptance region that is bordered by first and second stoppers, said stoppers each including a front wall and a side wall arranged at a right angle to the front wall;

stacking pages of a first job into said first stopper;

offset stacking pages of a successive second job over pages of ~~[[a]]~~ said preceding first job by ~~spatially~~ laterally offsetting the pages of the successive second job into said second stopper with respect to the pages of the preceding first job; ~~and~~

mechanically fixing at said first stopper only an uppermost page of the first job by a continuous downward pressure onto a top surface of said uppermost page of the first job after the offset stacking of the pages of the first job and during the offset stacking of all of the pages of the second job without applying pressure on pages of the second job with said mechanical fixing~~[[.]]~~;

offset stacking pages of a successive third job over pages of said preceding second job by laterally offsetting the pages of the successive third job into said first stopper with respect to the pages of the preceding second job; and

mechanically fixing at said second stopper only an uppermost page of the second job by a continuous downward pressure onto a top surface of said

uppermost page of the second job after the offset stacking of the pages of the second job and during the offset stacking of all of the pages of the third job without applying pressure on pages of the third job with said mechanical fixing.

34. (currently amended) A method according to claim 33, wherein said step of fixing at the first stopper ensues in a region of the uppermost page that is not covered by pages of the second job due to the spatial displacement of the pages of the second job relative to the first job.

35. (currently amended) A method according to claim 33, wherein said step of fixing at the first stopper and said step of fixing at the second stopper uses said downward pressure on the uppermost page at a region of a corner of the respective page.

36. (previously presented) A method according to claim 33, wherein the respective pressure at the first stopper and at the second stopper is mechanically exerted by a paper hold-down pad.

37. (withdrawn and currently amended) A method according to claim 33, wherein the respective downward pressure which is exerted at the first stopper and at the second stopper comprises a positive pressure of a gas or gas mixture.

38. (withdrawn) A method according to claim 37, wherein the gas or the gas mixture comprises air.

39. (withdrawn and currently amended) A method according to claim 37, further comprising the step of:

generating said positive pressure for the pressure on the respective uppermost page by a compressor that is also used to generate positive pressure to separate page-shaped recording media from a stack.

40. (withdrawn) A method according to claim 37, further comprising the step of:

adjusting a strength of said positive pressure dependent on a weight of the pages.

41. (previously presented) A method according to claim 33, wherein said offset stacking ensues in an output device of a printer or copy device.

42. (currently amended) A method according to claim 33, ~~wherein said step of offset stacking is carried out in a page acceptance region that is bordered by first and second stoppers, said stoppers each including a front wall and a side wall arranged at a right angle thereto, and~~ further comprising the steps of:

~~laterally displacing the pages;~~

using a first paddlewheel for said ~~offset~~ stacking of the first pages of the first job into said first stopper, said first paddlewheel being provided in a region of the first stopper to advance the first pages with their corners into the right angle of the first stopper;

using a second paddlewheel for the offset stacking of the ~~second~~ pages of the second job into said second stopper, said second paddlewheel being provided in a region of the second stopper to advance the ~~second~~ pages with their corners into the right angle of the second stopper; and

performing said ~~step~~ respective steps of mechanical fixing in the respective region of each respective stopper.

43. (currently amended) A method according to claim 42, further comprising the steps of:

shifting ~~one of said first and second paddlewheels~~ paddlewheel and a respective device to mechanically fix the pages along an axle for a format change-over of the pages.

44. (currently amended) A method according to claim 42, wherein said respective paddlewheels and a respective device to mechanically fix the uppermost page are mechanically and rigidly connected with one another.

45-47. (cancelled)

48. (currently amended) A method according to claim 33, wherein the job is a print job the first, second, and third jobs are copy jobs.

49. (currently amended) A method according to claim 33, wherein the ~~job is a copy job~~ the first, second, and third jobs are copy jobs.

50. (currently amended) A method according to claim 33, wherein said fixing of the uppermost page at the first and second stoppers is performed with a positive pressure, and a respective device to fix the uppermost page includes a valve that is opened and closed under control of a vertical position of the device for fixing.

51. (currently amended) A method according to claim 50, further comprising the step of:

controlling the vertical position of the respective device to fix with a control shaft which also controls a vertical position of a respective

paddlewheel to offset stack the respective print or copy job, the respective device to fix and the respective paddlewheel moving in opposing directions.

52. (currently amended) A device to offset ~~stacked~~ stack pages of successive print or copy jobs that are supplied to a page output unit as a page stream, comprising:

a page acceptance region that is bordered by first and second stoppers, said stoppers each including a front wall and a sidewall arranged at a right angle to the front wall;

a page offset stacking apparatus which is operable to stack pages of a first job into said first stopper and to offset stacked stack pages of a successive second job into said second stopper over pages of [[a]] said preceding first job so that said pages of said second job and said pages of said first job are spatially laterally offset with respect to one another, said stacking apparatus also being operable to offset stack pages of a third job into said first stopper over pages of said preceding second job so that said pages of said third job and said pages of said second job are laterally offset with respect to one another;

a first fixing device which mechanically fixes at said first stopper only an uppermost page of the first job by a continuous downward pressure onto a top surface of said uppermost page of the first job after the offset stacking of the pages of the first job and during the offset stacking of all of the pages of the second job without applying pressure on pages of the second job with said first fixing device ~~mechanical fixing,~~ ; and

a second fixing device which mechanically fixes at said second stopper only an uppermost page of the second job by a continuous downward pressure onto a top surface of said uppermost page of the second job after the offset stacking of the pages of the second job and during the offset stacking of all of the pages of the third job without applying pressure on pages of the third job with said second fixing device.

53. (currently amended) A device according to claim 52, wherein said first fixing device is disposed in a region of the uppermost page that is not covered by pages of the second job due to the spatial displacement.

54. (currently amended) A device according to claim 52, wherein said first and second fixing device~~is~~ devices are operable to exert a pressure on the respective uppermost page at a region of a corner of the page.

55. (currently amended) A device according to claim 52, wherein the respective pressure is mechanically exerted by a paper hold-down pad as said respective first or second fixing device.

56. (currently amended) A device as claimed in claim 52, wherein the respective pressure is exerted with elastic force.

57. (withdrawn and currently amended) A device according to claim 52, wherein the respective pressure is exerted by a positive pressure of a gas or gas mixture as said fixing device.

58. (withdrawn) A device according to claim 57, wherein said gas or gas mixture comprises air.

59. (withdrawn and currently amended) A device according to claim 57, further comprising:

a compressor connected to said first and second fixing device devices to generate said respective positive pressure, said compressor being connected to provide positive pressure to separate page-shaped recording media from a stack.

60. (withdrawn) A device according to claim 57, whereby a control is provided with which a strength of the positive pressure is adjusted dependent on a weight of the pages.

61. (currently amended) A device according to claim 52, further comprising:

the respective front walls of the first and second stoppers lying on a common axis;

~~a page acceptance region in which all pages are offset stacked;~~

~~first and second stoppers bordering said page acceptance region and disposed at right angles to one another, said stoppers each including a front wall lying on a common axis and a side wall arranged at a right angle thereto;~~

said lateral displacement of pages ensuing along the common axis;

a first paddlewheel is provided in a region of said first stopper, said first paddlewheel being operable to advance first pages of the first job and the third job with their corners into the right angle of the first stopper, said first paddlewheel providing offset stacking of the first pages of the first job and offset stacking of the pages of the third job;

a second paddlewheel is provided in a region of said second stopper, said second paddlewheel being operable to advance second pages of the

second job with their corners into the right angle of the second stopper[[,]] ;

and

said second paddlewheel providing offset stacking of the ~~second~~ pages of the second job, ~~and~~

~~said fixing device is disposed in a region of said first stopper.~~

62. (currently amended) A device according to claim 61, wherein ~~at least one of said paddlewheels~~ second paddlewheel and said second fixing device are mounted so as to be movable along an axle for a format change-over of the pages.

63. (currently amended) A device according to claim 62, wherein said ~~at least one of said two paddlewheels~~ first paddlewheel and said first fixing device are mechanically and rigidly connected with one another and said second paddlewheel and said second fixing device are mechanically and rigidly connected with one another.